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THE DIRECTOR OF  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

National Intelligence Officers

2 June 1976

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[Redacted]  
IC Staff

Attached is a proposed briefing note for  
the DCI, commenting on the findings and recommenda-  
tions of the NIE Evaluation Committee of the PFIAB.

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*for*  
[Redacted]  
Assistant National Intelligence Officer  
for Strategic Programs

Attachment  
As Stated

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2 June 1976

BRIEFING NOTE FOR THE DCI  
(PFIAB Meeting - 3 and 4 June 1976)

DCI Comments on the Findings and Recommendations  
of the NIE Evaluation Committee of the PFIAB

I have reviewed the draft report of the PFIAB committee evaluating NIEs on Soviet strategic forces, and have discussed its findings and recommendations with members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to work out a mutually satisfactory program for responding to the Board's recommendations without resorting to an exchange of formal memoranda.

A. Concerning the committee's general findings and recommendations

-- We are continuing to take steps which we hope will improve the comprehensiveness, soundness and utility of the estimates on Soviet strategic programs.

-- We intend, as in the past, to identify in the NIE key uncertainties and divergent opinions arising within the Intelligence Community.

-- As for consumer reaction to national intelligence products, I have requested [ ] to improve the assessment of intelligence production and how it relates to consumer utilization.

-- We welcome and will fully support any improvements in the US Government's procedures for developing net evaluations of US capabilities with respect to potential adversaries.

B. Concerning the recommended experiment for improving the NIE process (see attachment for background)

-- My Deputy for NIOs, George Carver, recently had consultations with Mr. Galvin concerning how best to conduct the proposed experiment in competitive analysis.

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-- We have suggested a detailed approach to the experiment which we hope will meet the approval of Mr. Galvin's committee and of the PFIAB. Central to this approach is the idea that those who are to be involved in preparing the competitive analysis conduct their work independently of the intelligence personnel and organizations involved in putting together the NIE itself.


-- In the meantime, the NIO for Strategic Programs is taking preliminary steps to implement the experiment whose results we hope to have available at the same time that the new NIE on Soviet strategic forces is issued in the fall.

C. Concerning the "collateral items" adduced by the committee

-- We have tentative plans to produce within the next several months a separate NIE on Soviet intentions, objectives and tactics.

-- We are in the process of creating a part-time Intelligence Advisory Panel to the DCI which will review selected NIEs prior to their publication. This Panel will consist of approximately three dozen people of extraordinary competence in key substantive areas, who are also articulate, logical and generally insightful. The members of this Panel would be drawn from within the Intelligence Community, the non-intelligence components of the government, and -- to the extent feasible -- the outside world: academia, industry, and even (if possible) the world of journalism.

-- We are reviewing the matters of declassification and public accountability for NIE judgments.

*for*   
Assistant National Intelligence Officer  
for Strategic Programs

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Background Concerning the Proposal of the PFIAB for an "Experiment" in  
Competitive Analysis

-- The PFIAB first raised the "experiment" in an 8 August 1975 letter to the President in which it stated that NIE 11-3/8-74 (Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Conflict Through 1985) "is seriously misleading in the presentation of a number of key judgments and in projecting a sense of complacency unsupported by the facts; as a consequence it is deficient for the purpose it should serve." The NSC Staff asked Mr. Colby to provide the President with comments on the PFIAB-proposed experiment. In his reply to the President on 21 November 1975, Mr. Colby suggested that the forthcoming 1975 NIE on Soviet strategic forces be reviewed by the PFIAB to ascertain the extent to which it overcame deficiencies perceived in the 1974 NIE as a basis for determining if the PFIAB experiment should be pursued.

-- A 1 April 1976 report of the PFIAB's ad hoc NIE Evaluation Committee (Chairman: Robert W. Galvin, Members: Edward Teller and John S. Foster) concludes that the PFIAB's proposal of August 1975 to create an experimental competitive analysis group be pursued. The Evaluation Committee also concluded that a National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) to implement this proposal be considered. The Committee reached its conclusions after (a) comparing the 1974 and 1975 NIEs, (b) reviewing a ten-year "track record" of NIE judgments about Soviet strategic forces, and (c) conducting a survey of some 40 "authorities" in and out of the government.

-- Mr. Carver met with Mr. Galvin in Chicago on 12 May to discuss the method by which the experiment should be conducted. Its details are contained in a draft letter from Mr. Galvin to the DCI which was prepared by Mr. Carver and the NIO/Strategic Programs. The DCI approved its transmittal to Mr. Galvin on 26 May. No NSDM is envisioned as part of the processes outlined for the experiment; the NIO/SP presently is working on its implementation.

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SUBJECT: PFIAB Meeting (3 and 4 June 1976) -- Proposed DCI Comments  
on the NIE Evaluation Committee's Findings and Recommendations

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